



Orono Schools

Where Excellence is a Tradition and a Goal

District 278
685 N. Old Crystal Bay Road
Long Lake, MN 55356

952-449-8300
info@oronok12.mn.us

District News • February 2, 2024



From the Superintendent

Kristine Flesher, Ed.D.

I hope this message finds you well and energized for second semester! Congratulations to our students who finished semester 1 strong and ready for the next phase.

And speaking of next phases, I am thrilled to share an important update regarding our ongoing Strategic Planning initiatives. We have successfully transitioned from the Stakeholder Input Phase to the Core Team Planning Phase, marking a significant milestone in this effort. Your invaluable contributions during the input phase through our family survey, community conversations, recent graduate focus groups, and broader community survey, have laid a robust foundation for the next steps.

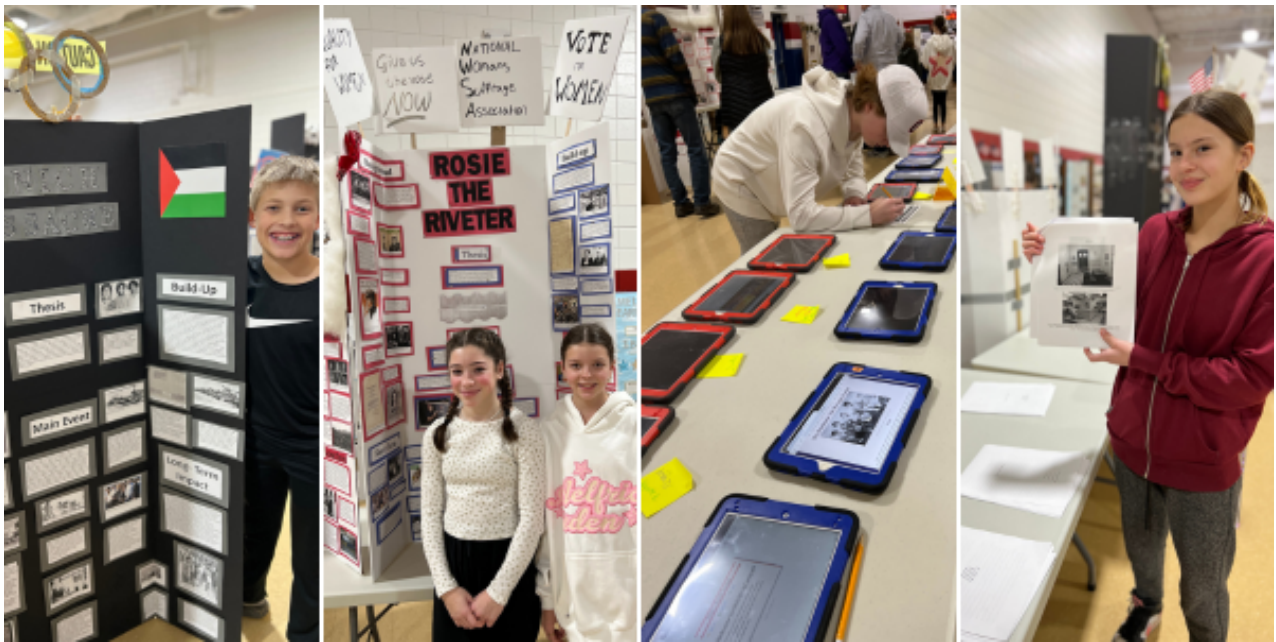
Our Core Planning Team will convene in March to review the wealth of input that reflects the collective wisdom, aspirations, and concerns of district stakeholders. This comprehensive data will guide the Team in formulating strategic initiatives that align with our shared vision for academic excellence and healthy child development.

We understand the importance of keeping you informed throughout this process, and are committed to providing regular updates as we move forward. We are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead and remain dedicated to fostering an educational environment that empowers every student to thrive.

Warm regards,
Kristine Flesher, Ed.D.
Superintendent

History Day Projects | Orono Middle School 7th Grade

Students, teachers and staff, and families look forward to the seventh-grade History Day Showcase every winter. Students direct their learning by choosing a topic of interest, conducting research, and choosing a method to display their findings. This year, approximately 210 projects were on display—from exhibits to websites to research papers. The following students were selected to compete at regionals in their category. **Individual Exhibit:** Hazel Holmes, Jack McKeand, Calla Anderson, Bennett Williams, Keelin Murray, Alina Hermansen, Juliette Crane, Allie VanCamp, Evelyn Schwarzkopf, Laney Brieter, Clara Lahti, and Lorali Hermann. **Group Exhibit:** Caitlyn Anderson & Elise Binder; Lauren Benjamin & Everleigh Strenhagen; Stella Fox, Alex Peterson & Ellie Haag; Dylan Koopman & Connor Rausch; Lula Coffey and Sydney Dahlstrom; and Audrey Meneses and Lydia Sponsler. **Individual Documentary:** Selah Ragan, Ryan Loop, Tristan Banken, and Stevie Martin. **Group Documentary:** Solomon Lyngstad & Ben Van De Ven; Calvin Mclean & Evan Cooper; and David Bremer & Sawyer Spronk. **Individual Performance:** Isabel Holm and Ava Darst. **Individual Website:** Kyra Miller, Caitlin Dahlberg, Joseph Hamer, and Brecken Garding. **Group Website:** Avion Battle & Case Nokelby; Levi Madson & Olin Erickson; Vincent Dougherty & Quinn Richmond; Claire Severtson & Regina Veach; Josh Blue & Michael Carey; Oliver Groves and Andrew Bazil. **Research Papers:** William Johnson, Taylor Flesher and El Morris. Congratulations to these students and many more earning Honorable Mention!



Unified Basketball Tournament

Orono was proud to host the Special Olympics Unified Basketball Tournament on January 31 in the Orono Activities Center. Players and partners from 16 Unified teams around the Metro competed for a chance to play at Target Center. Shout-out to our players, partners, Unified student leaders, and high school Advisor Michelle Swenson. Orono's Unified Basketball team is coached by varsity basketball players Nolan Groves, Owen Hirt, and Brady Wooley. You can learn more about Unified on the [middle school](#) and [high school activities](#) webpages.



Supporting Our Spartans | Free Presentations

School has evolved since our own days at the desk! Learn more and register today for two free, interactive workshops hosted by the Orono Technology Team. Not to be missed!

- "[Stay Connected with Your Spartan's School Journey!](#)" (Virtual or In-person)
Thursday, February 8, 6-7:30 p.m., Orono Activities Center
- "[Decoding the Digital Elephant: Artificial Intelligence's \(AI's\) Role in Our Children's World](#)" (Virtual or In-person)
Thursday, March 14, 6-7:30 p.m., Orono Activities Center

Register Now for Either Presentation



MDE Assistant Commissioner Visits Orono

Orono Schools was pleased to welcome a visit from **Bobbie Burnham**, Minnesota Department of Education Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Teaching and Learning. Ms. Burnham, pictured second from right, conducted a listening session with administration and staff, and discussed the impact of the last Minnesota legislative session, including provisions in the READ Act. Ms. Burnham enjoyed a tour of Orono Intermediate School and Schumann Elementary led by Dr. Lamparske and Ms. Jodl. Before joining MDE, Ms. Burnham implemented innovative learning strategies and evidence-based practices as a school administrator, teacher and coach. Thank you for visiting!

U.S. Presidential Scholar Candidates

Congratulations to Jack Eugster, Emily Middleton and Walter Royal for being named candidates to the [U.S. Presidential Scholars Program](#). The Program was established in 1964 to recognize and honor some of our nation's most distinguished

graduating high school seniors. Application is by invitation only; therefore, students may not apply individually to the program, nor may their schools nominate them. Of the 4,000 general candidates, approximately 650 will be named Semifinalists and then, in April, 161 Scholars will be selected. We are honored to have **three** outstanding seniors recognized through their candidacy.



Jack Eugster



Emily Middleton



Walter Royal

Orono School Board Meeting Highlights

Monday, January 8, 2024 | [Agenda](#)

- Election of Board Officers | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Superintendent's Report on Excellence | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Board Reports & Comments | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Policy Action | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Official Actions for First Meeting 2024 | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Annual Audit Report | [Watch the Presentation](#) (due to technical difficulties, we also refer you to the MMKR presentation on the [Orono School Board webpage](#))

Monday, January 22, 2024 | [Agenda](#)

- Superintendent's Report on Excellence | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Board Member Reports | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Approval of School Board Meeting Dates for 2024-25 | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Orono Action Platform | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Orono High School 2024-25 Registration Guide and Report | [Watch the Presentation](#)

The next meeting of the [Orono School Board](#) is scheduled for Monday, February 12, 2024 at 7 p.m. in the District Office Assembly Room. The public is invited to register to participate in a [Public Comment Session](#), beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the District Office Assembly Room. The [registration form](#) will be open from Friday, February 9 at 9 a.m. through 12:00 p.m. (noon) on February 12, 2024.



February 19 ● No School K-12, Presidents Day
February 20 ● No School K-12, Professional Day

Upcoming Events

See the [Calendars page](#) on the Orono Schools website for more.

- **February 5** | 8th Grade Parent Night, 6 p.m., Orono High School Auditorium
- **February 5-9** | National School Counseling Week
- **February 12** | Orono School Board Meeting

- **February 15** | National School Resource Officer Appreciation Day
 - **February 19** | No School K-12, Presidents Day
 - **February 20** | No School K-12, Professional Day
-



Orono Public Schools • 952-449-8300 • info@orono.k12.mn.us • www.oronoschools.org

Orono Public Schools | District 278 would like to continue connecting with you via email. If you prefer to be removed from our list, please contact Orono Public Schools | District 278 directly. To stop receiving all email messages distributed through our SchoolMessenger service, follow this link and confirm: [Unsubscribe](#)

SchoolMessenger is a notification service used by the nation's leading school systems to connect with parents, students, and staff through voice, SMS text, email, and social media.